



Advanzia testifies >



Advanzia deploys a converged infrastructure



Facing an obsolete IT infrastructure which was not fully in line anymore with performance and reliability requirements, Advanzia bank decided to replace its IT platforms with a converged solution HPE Converged System 700. At the same time the internal datacenter has been externalized.

When at the beginning of 2015, Vincent Martin takes the lead of the IT department of Advanzia, the infrastructure faces failure risks and is articulated around a rather old NetApp FAS data storage system and very diverse and varied HPE servers. “ With some 25% of the systems more than 6 years old and 60% between 2 and 5 years old” explains Vincent Martin. “While the infrastructure wasn’t robust enough, nor scalable nor efficient” he resumes “without speaking about the fact that procedures were not really formalized”. And specifying that the IT systems were hosted partly internally and for a part externally for disaster recovery purposes. >>>



Challenges >

At first, Vincent Martin intends to simply extend the storage, but quickly comes to the conclusion that an in-depth review of the entire IT approach is necessary and more specifically the infrastructure. After consultation of the market by the means of an RFP “the first one of this size ever emitted by the bank for IT” the ICT manager chooses for a converged infrastructure rather than calculation resources and separate data storage. “Our solution had to support the development of the bank. Furthermore, we were already in an analysis phase concerning the evolution of our core banking solution developed internally and the set-up of a market software package (in the meantime Temenos T24 has been chosen, editorial note). Other advanced arguments in favor of a converged solution were the relatively limited internal resources for maintenance (mainly the deployment of firmware) and the management of the systems (the IT team, certainly moved to about a twenty IT specialists, mainly focused on the development), as well as the necessity to have a high availability platform capable to meet all the new legal requirements without too much human impact.

Besides, another decision had to be taken: keep the classic storage disks or move to flash disks. “At that time, full flash was a risky choice” entrusts Vincent Martin. “But as we wanted a scale-out solution in order to guarantee our growth of the five coming years at least, it is this technology that we finally selected. Although we were conscious that the financial costs would be superior. You have to know that this project is the most important investment ever made by Advanzia on IT level, so the management had to be convinced about the relevance of this choice” insists the ICT Manager.

Deployment >

Facing the competition of other well known players in the field of converged infrastructure, Advanzia has finally chosen for a HPE Converged System 700 platform and full flash 3 PAR 8200 with 32 disks of 4 TO, 8 C7000 lame servers and StoreOne back up appliances, together with Cisco for the connectivity (located on top of rack) and yCenter Operations for the management. An offer presented by the integrator System Solutions. “As a privileged HPE partner, we were able to present a configuration meeting perfectly all the requirements of Advanzia in terms of capacity, flexibility, redundancy, e.g. We even got access to all the HPE resources on European level. And to decrease the price of the solution, taken into account the acquisition of more expensive flash disks, we even worked on the size of the integrated RAM’s” explains Thomas Callebaut, Account Manager of System Solutions. “We deployed a dedicated team on this important project and in the end, the installation has been executed one hour short of 88 days while the contract had foreseen 88 days”.

The previous infrastructure which was based on an internal datacenter and an external DR site is now hosted in 2 external rooms, with a transparent fail-over to a second after disaster site. “As a customer we have noticed a real symbiosis between HPE and System Solutions” congratulates Vincent Martin who ads to have signed a Datacenter Care service contract with HPE.

Founded in 2005, Advanzia offers at present two products: a MasterCard Gold credit card without costs and a deposit account. The credit cards are proposed to persons living in Germany, France, Luxemburg and Austria, while the deposit account is available for persons living in the European Union. Advanzia offers to their customers clear solutions for their bank transactions and commits to the largest possible transparency at all times.

At the end of 2015, the company had emitted 833.000 cards (against 709.000 in 2014) with a revenue of over 1,5 billion €, representing 2.850 € per active customer, with a result before tax of 35,6 million € (against 27,7 million € end 2014).



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